

Earlier this week, the U.S. House of Representatives approved a measure to extend federal highway, transit, and highway safety programs for six months, through March 2012. This ensures that some 134,000 active highway and bridge projects across the country will not grind to a halt on October 1st.

According to a recent report by the Urban Land Institute, the United States will need to invest \$2 trillion to repair and upgrade our roads, bridges, and dams. Close to home, a major civil engineering association found that more than three-quarters of New Jersey's major roadways are in poor or mediocre condition.

Highway, transit, and safety programs are funded by federal taxes on gasoline, which have not increased since 1993. Until the beginning of the recession in 2007, the steady rise in fuel consumption was sufficient to sustain funding. This, however, is no longer the case. According to the Congressional Budget Office, if current cash flow remains unchanged, the Highway Trust Fund will be unable to meet its obligations as early as 2012 or 2013.

The President, recognizing that strong infrastructure is crucial to our economic recovery and growth, made infrastructure investment one of the pillars of his proposed jobs bill. If Congress were to pass the measure proposed by the President without any changes, it would inject \$50 billion into the economy through infrastructure projects that would create hundreds of thousands of jobs – all without adding a cent to the deficit.

Beware of Disaster Relief Scams

FEMA is already at work responding to recent disasters. A resident of Lambertville wrote recently to say, "We live in an area that never is affected by water from the common flooding of the Delaware River... Following your direction I applied to FEMA. Their response was immediate, but I had no reason to believe that the application might be other than an exercise... Much to my surprise, the application was approved and I received a substantial grant that I expect to cover most of my expenses in restoring our home for us."

I encourage you, too, to apply as quickly as possible to begin the disaster relief process.

Further information is available [on my website](#) .

As you seek disaster assistance, please be wary of potential scammers. [The New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs has reported](#)

that homeowners in Little Falls received a scam letter that began, "STATEMENT OF YOUR BENEFITS," and stated, "The Payment Security Administration (PSA) has determined that you shall receive entitlements and a Financial Recovery Award of up to \$27,500.00." The letter asks recipients to mail a "Benefit Consent Form" to a post office box in Canada, along with a "Processing Fee" of \$29.97 paid by check, money order, or credit card authorization.

Please be wary of any mailer or advertisement that, like the "Payment Security Administration" mailer, has any of these signs of a possible scam:

- Offering huge prizes in exchange for small, up-front payments;
- The use of an official-sounding but unverifiable name; for example, if an Internet search reveals that an agency by that name may not actually exist;
- Fine print that includes unclear or confusing language; or
- The request that payments be sent outside the United States.

Flood Clean-Up Assistance

Do you need help with cleaning up flood damage in your home, basement, or small business? Volunteers may be available to assist the elderly, disabled, and those needing extra assistance to clean up water and mud damage. To request assistance, please dial 2-1-1. Further information is available on the [NJ 2-1-1 Hurricane Response and Recovery website](#) .

Sincerely,

Rush Holt
Member of Congress